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COLONIAL POEMS.



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**COLONIAL POEMS.**

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# COLONIAL POEMS.

BY

MRS. WILLIAM J. ANDERSON,

YOUNGEST DAUGHTER OF THE REV. EDWARD BAKER, OF  
SOUTH AUSTRALIA.



LONDON:

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## P R E F A C E .

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THE following poems are reminiscences of a beloved wife, who departed this life in her twenty-sixth year, on Sunday, 12th April, 1868, at Souillac, in the Island of Mauritius. There, with an infant daughter, she lies interred, in the joyful hope of a glorious resurrection.

The pieces were written under different circumstances and in various lands, during the last ten years of the author's life. They are strictly what their title implies, "Colonial Poems," the author never having visited Europe, but having spent her days in the colonies of South Australia, Mauritius, and the Cape of Good Hope.

During her last illness, she expressed a wish that her fugitive and scattered verses, some of which had appeared in Australian Periodicals under the signature of "*Frances*," should be collected,

and presented in a permanent form to her parents and others whom she had loved. While the present publication carries out that desire, it accomplishes something more, by placing before those of the public who may read the volume the breathings of a pious, gentle, and thoughtful spirit.

Most of the pieces are now published for the first time, several of them without having been revised by the author.

WILLIAM J. ANDERSON.

SOUILLAC, MAURITIUS, 1869.

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# P O E M S .



## THE SHADOW OF THE PAST.

A TALE OF AUSTRALIA.

It was a peaceful place, that old farm-house,  
Beneath the quiet shade of ancient trees,  
That stretched their long white arms above and  
    round,  
As if they strove to shelter from the world,  
The cold unfeeling world, the fragile forms  
That dwelt beneath. A quiet sleepy spot  
Was that old white-faced cottage; yet there'd been  
The busy stir, the going out and in  
Of many a toilworn form in days gone by;  
But now, the scene is changed.

    The sun looks down  
Upon a tranquil picture. 'Neath the shade  
Of an old rose-tree lies the favourite dog,  
Contentedly, with one great drowsy eye  
Opening as each fresh shower of scented leaves  
Is scattered by the zephyr's gentle breath.  
A tame old magpie by the vine-wreathed porch

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	ON THE DEATH OF AMY
	SOME FORGOTTEN
	CAPT TOWN
	PORT LOUIS
	LA FÉE DES MOÛTS
	THE TRIAL
	A PRAYER

1993

~~SECRET~~ - THE PAST.

~~is shown as~~ Farm-house,  
~~located~~ recent logs,  
~~the~~ saw arms above and

...the world,  
...fragile forms

...sleepy spot ...ned  
...there'd been

...there'd been

The bus is there

But ...

since first

1 for the

Good-nig

ln.—grey

B 2



Tried many a clumsy leap, to reach a twig,  
Where, all unconscious of the danger near,  
A bright-backed beetle perches in the sun.  
And almond and acacia trees grow down  
The gentle slope, that scarcely could be called  
A garden—for the fibry tangled weeds  
Grow o'er the paths in wild luxuriance.  
But by the windows and around the porch,  
The grass is banished, and some careful hand  
Has coaxed the sweet old flowers of home to bloom.  
Behind the cottage, many an ample barn  
Once filled, stands, falling into ruins now ;  
And empty stalls, where once had waited steeds  
To hear the crowing of a feathered host  
That called them to another day of toil.  
And far away—beyond the woods and fields  
Lie the old gloomy hills, roll within roll,  
Folding each other with eternal arms.  
The spirit of repose reigns everywhere ;  
And yet the very stillness has a voice  
That murmurs of a long tumultuous past,  
And tells the mighty force that raised each hill  
From the dark heaving depths, and set it there,  
Solemn and still, for ever to remain.  
The stretching fields have found a silent voice  
To speak of days when the old pioneers  
Made all the echoes answer back the sound  
Of ringing axes and of giant trees

Crashing to earth. Even the old farm-house  
Tells of an active time ; and on the brow  
Of its young mistress rests a settled shade,  
Left by an unforgotten stormy past.  
And though the sun may shine and shine, a cloud  
Still floats between its joybeams and her soul :  
Yet had she seen scarce twenty years revolve,  
And disappear,—drowned in the stream of time.  
Her eyes were dark as the black midnight skies  
And fathomless as ocean,—yet sometimes  
There shot a sudden gleam, as if some thought  
Had waked a spent volcano in her breast ;  
And strangely beautiful seemed Helen then,  
Proud and defiant, with a smile of scorn  
Upon her lips,—and her tall figure raised  
Above the height of woman. There were times  
However, when her face was lovelier far,  
When a soft lovelight filled her eyes, and beamed  
Upon a merry child, whose sunny curls  
Had been a refuge for the truant winds  
For ten bright happy years.

Blithe little May,  
She never guessed the deep absorbing love  
Her sister bore her. Years had passed, since first  
Each to the other learn't to be so dear.  
No gentle mother watched and prayed for them ;  
No father blessed them as they said " Good-night."  
Alone they dwelt, with an old kinsman,—grey

With time or sorrow ; and he lived absorbed  
Among his favorite books,—a silent man,  
Thinking no woman's mind could raise itself  
To the high platform that his own had reached.  
And thus he left them to their own free will ;  
And often in the gathering shades of eve,  
When scarce the sky was tinted in the west,  
And the pale stars were opening their meek eyes,  
They roamed among the woods,—and little May  
Would wander from her sister's side, to seek  
The brightest flowers or softest feathery grass,  
Or sparkling insects. Helen sat alone  
And watched the stars ; she loved the cool white  
stars.

It seemed as if they shone into her breast,  
And, by their frozen light, quenched its fierce fire.  
And so, she oft surveyed them, till her eyes  
Lost all their scornful light, and tear-drops gleamed  
Like the reflection of those shining gems  
Within a quiet lake \* \* \* \* \*  
And so they lived, and scarcely thought of change ;  
Time trod so softly by them,—every day  
Seemed like the one gone by, the same sun rose  
And woke them to the same home-work ; the  
cows

To milk and loose, the chickens and pet birds  
To feed ; the rooms to sweep and set in order,  
And flowers to gather freshly for the vase ;

The simple meals to get and clear away,  
For all was done by Helen's busy hands,  
That seemed too white and tender for the toil.  
Yet cheerfully she worked from day to day,  
And only wished no change might ever come  
In the sweet calmness of her humble life.  
But sometimes, when the hours were still and  
dark,

And little May was fast asleep in bed,  
She sat alone, and thought of all the past,  
And then of what the future yet might bring—  
The future! Ah, who has not strained to see  
His own dim future? fancying sometimes  
The misty cloud uprolled, and what shall be  
Revealed—perchance an early death, a grave  
A name forgotten, or perchance a life  
Too long and weary—full of pain and toil.  
Say, mother, hast thou never waked at night,  
And looked upon the tender little form  
That seemed so thine; thinking, "Oh! what if  
God

Should take it from me? Could I bear to see  
These soft warm limbs grow cold and stiff and  
still?

How could I see this little silken head  
Laid down to moulder in the cold wet ground?  
How could I rest on pillows soft and warm,  
And listen to the rain upon the roof,

And know the darling from my bosom gone,  
Was lying coldly under all the storm ? ”  
And then hast thou not wept and sighed the  
prayer :

“ Oh ! God, whatever in the future lies,  
Let it not bring me this ? ”

And thou, young wife,  
Didst thou not weep upon thy wedding-day,  
To think the future had may-be in store  
A lonely home and widow's veil for thee—  
That all this love so deep and exquisite  
Might but forerun a deeper balmless woe ?  
“ Love is the source of all our misery,  
In this dark death-cursed world ! ”

So Helen thought.

Yet she had never known a tenderer love  
Than for her little sister ; all her thoughts  
And hopes and fears were centred in the child.  
It was for her she feared ; her would she keep  
For ever nestling in their hidden home.  
And then she dreaded that a day would come,  
When the young wings would spread them for a  
flight.

May was so fair—she could have wished a cloud  
Might mar her loveliness, before the world  
Had seen and sought it ; for the world will pass  
Without a thought the sweetest scented flower  
Once its bright leaves are withered. Helen longed

That May might never trust a love but hers.  
Next to her darling sister, Helen loved  
Her steed, her restless fiery Romeo.  
And often in her lonely mountain rides,  
She talked to him as to a trusty friend ;  
Telling him of her real, and fancied griefs.  
Her bitterness and pride, and scornful hate  
Of all mankind, were whispered in his ear,  
As standing with her arms about his neck  
Alone among the forest trees, she felt  
Cut off from all the world, and with no wish  
For other friends or other joy than this,  
To ride alone, free as the wild March wind  
That almost took away her breath, and caught  
Her broad-brimmed hat and bore it out of reach ;  
Blowing the streaming hair from off her face,  
And startling Romeo with showers of leaves  
From the old gum-trees, falling at their feet,  
Thickly as heaven-given blessings—

This wild life

Was all the maid desired,—many a day  
She spent alone upon those untrod hills.  
Sometimes she took her favourite books, and read  
Of “Desdemona’s” fate or “Timon’s” wrongs,  
Thus cherishing her own heart’s bitterness.  
Thus had she lived, a proud mysterious girl  
For five long years. And the good neighbour  
women

Knew but her name, and that her sire had died  
Ere he had dwelt a year at the farm-house.

A change was near for Helen ; her young heart,  
Like a lone island that the hurricane  
Had swept, now fanned by a more gentle breeze  
Sent forth a few pale leaves—alas but born  
To be sent whirling through the troubled air  
By winds still wilder.

'Twas summer, and the distant hills were blue  
And misty with the smoke of numerous fires.  
All earth seemed withered by the burning breath  
From the far north ; and not a floating cloud  
Slept on its bed of air. The sun went down  
Slowly and red, as if in wrath to leave  
Australia's shores to rest 'neath the cool moon.  
Helen and May, beneath the almond trees,  
Stood watching for the stars ; and the old dog  
With pendant tongue lay panting hard for air.  
Even uncle Bernard sallied forth to taste  
The breath of night, before the open door.  
While thus they stood, the sound of horses' feet  
Came from the wood ; and at the garden gate  
Appeared a stranger, weary, worn and faint  
With fruitless wandering. His cheek was pale,  
And dim his dark blue eye. With feeble step  
He came and asked a shelter for the night—  
Said all the day he'd ridden in the sun,

The scorching, blighting sun ; and in the woods  
Had missed the path. Just as the sun went  
down,

He saw the cottage, and it almost seemed  
As if it welcomed him, and so he came.  
Warmly old uncle Bernard took his hand,  
And offered shelter to the wanderer ;  
While even Helen smiled, and little May  
Led to the field the stranger's tired steed.  
The hours flew by, and still they sat and talked  
Beside the open window, the old man  
White-haired and wrinkled, and the stranger pale  
And youthful, on whose brow a shade was seen,  
That told of sadness and of anxious thought.  
And Helen stood beneath the acacia boughs,  
And marvelled who the wanderer might be.  
He said his name was Leonard—Leonard Gray—  
That he had left that day the busy town  
To seek the homestead of a country friend.  
He seemed so sad that Helen came and listened,  
And wondered if a blight upon *his* life  
Had fallen too, as once, long years ago  
Had come to hers. And had he also found  
That all was death and pain and vanity  
In the wide world—no joy, no purity—  
All folly, pride and scorn, and selfishness ?  
She looked upon his face to see if there  
The world had left its blackening finger-marks ;



No, it was only pensive—very calm  
So calm, that in the deep blue eyes she read  
But one word—"Heaven." A strange mysterious  
awe

Crept o'er the proud cold girl ; she almost felt  
They entertained an angel unaware.  
The waning moon rose slowly o'er the hills,  
The hour had come for rest ; and as they said  
"Good-night ;" the stranger gently took her hand  
And said, "God bless thee." Oh ! how sweetly  
fell

Those healing words, deep into the sore heart ;  
She felt them lying there, through the long hours,  
And mingling with her dreams, so sweet they  
seemed

Those simple words, "God bless thee."

Silently

The moonbeams shimmered on the cottage roof,  
And crept within the chambers softly, like  
Good guardian angels, spirits sent to bless  
The heedless sleepers. But within the room  
Where Leonard lay, weary yet not asleep,  
No airy streamlet shed a glittering flood  
Upon his aching brow. Restless he lay  
Watching the tiny leaves wave to and fro  
Upon the window-pane, as if they strove  
With outstretched arms to catch the midnight air.  
He felt no air, he only felt a fire

In every vein; and when perchance he slept,  
Wild hideous dreams came crowding through his  
brain;

Again he wandered in the trackless woods,  
And all the air seemed full of fiery shapes,  
With wings of flame; and as they flew above  
They fanned him mockingly with blazing hands,  
And laughed in fiendish glee. Then with the  
sound

Yet ringing in his ear, he would awake  
To find 'twas moonlight; and the curlew wailed  
His dismal note above the cottage roof.  
Thus passed the night, and when the morning  
broke,

Weary he couched, with fever in his brain,  
And listened to the gentle steps without,  
To whispering voices, and May's merry laugh,—  
Thus much he heard; and then unconsciousness  
Came like a mist, and rested on his soul,  
Creeping among his thoughts,—till one by one  
They faded in the darkness.

\* \* \* \* \*

Long weeks went by, and still the stranger lay  
Helplessly tossing on his bed of pain.

And Helen watched beside him day and night  
With all a sister's care. The frozen pride  
That circled her young heart like a green isle,  
Girdled by seas of ice—had melted 'neath

The soft, warm streams of pity that o'erflowed  
Their boundaries, and secret founts sprang up ;  
And Leonard loved her, and would call her by  
The name of sister. In his wildest hours,  
Her voice could soothe him ; he would smile and  
think

She was his sister Mary, whom he laid  
Long years ago beneath the churchyard sod  
Of England's distant shore. No other hand  
Might smooth his pillow, bathe his burning brow,  
Or give him drink. And thus the quiet days  
Wore slowly on. At length one balmy morn,  
Came, when the faded earth had been refreshed,  
By early rains ; and from among the dead,  
Peeped forth the living blades of emerald grass ;  
And all around was glad. The sombre trees  
Waved merrily, and glittered in the sun ;  
While choirs of songsters warbled forth their glee  
In streams of song ; and little feathery clouds  
Went dancing o'er the sky, as if in joy  
That they had not been driven from their home,  
To water with their tears the selfish earth.  
Beside the open window Helen stood,  
Gazing with wistful eyes on the old hills,  
Where she was wont to ride on Romeo.  
Oh, how she panted for the cool fresh air,  
The bounding gallop and the solitude.  
Sadly she turned, and met a wondering gaze

From Leonard,—not the wonted vacant look,  
But a bright gleam that told the mind had come  
Back to its throne.

Yes, Leonard lived ; but many a weary day,  
Had yet to pass ; and long to him they seemed,  
When Helen went to seek her favourite haunts,  
And little merry-making May remained  
To read or chat to him. He thought no voice  
So sweet as Helen's, and no step so light.  
He loved her. At the first she seemed to shun  
His presence, and the scornful mocking light  
Gleamed in her eye ; but as the days went by,  
It faded, and the hours with Romeo,  
Grew shorter, till at last she seldom rode.  
Her lover understood her not, but knew  
That all was not at peace in her proud heart.  
Its sufferings had not yet been sanctified ;  
Its weariness of earth, exchanged for hope,  
And resignation still to live and work  
The will of God. And so in all the hours  
They spent together, Leonard tried to lead  
Her soul to holier aims. He strove to set  
Christ and His lowly life of pain and love  
Before her as her pattern and her guide.  
He spoke the true deep thoughts of a pure soul,  
And Helen listened, till a strange sweet calm  
Reigned in her breast. She knew not whence it  
came,

She could not dare to hope it was from heaven,  
Her thoughts seemed all so indistinct and vague.  
She only knew she loved the ancient story,  
When Leonard told it, and his clear, pure eyes  
Shone with unuttered pity ; and his voice  
So low and deep, she loved its simplest tone  
More than aught other music earth could give.  
Silent as falls the gentle summer rain  
On the dry blighted leaves of some fair flower,  
So silently love crept within her breast.  
She knew not it was love,—she only knew  
That she was happy ; and the days went by,  
Each like a shining butterfly, that seemed  
To ope its wings and show some rainbow hue,  
Then vanish, and, behind, another came  
Still brighter than the first,—but none would stay ;  
They passed, alas, to leave life's dreary road,  
Cheerless and darker than it seemed before  
They flitted through its gloom.  
One evening Helen stood beneath the trees,  
Gathering the early flowers ; above her head,  
Great gloomy clouds were sailing solemnly,  
So solemnly it seemed as if they cast  
Their shadows on her heart, and told a change  
Mysterious, undefined, was nigh for it.  
And quietly she passed from flower to flower,  
Scarce knowing what she did, and wondering why  
These undefined forebodings rested with her.

And Leonard watched her from the cottage door,  
With earnest eyes, in whose now troubled depth,  
There dwelt conflicting lights ; as if his soul  
Looked out upon the earth, and said " 'Twas good,  
'Twas beautiful and bright, but not his home."  
Far from its fancied joys, his spirit yearned  
To flee, but yet a glittering chain had twined  
Around his heart, and bound him still below.  
A change had come to Leonard ; a desire  
Struggled to life within him, 'twas to live.  
To live for what ? The answer slowly came ;  
For one frail human creature. Yes, the love,  
The deep pure love whose shrine had been in  
    heaven  
Left its ethereal home, and came to bow  
Before an earthly idol. Yes, he knew  
He felt in every throb of his fond heart  
That love had entered, uninvited there,  
And reigned within the chambers that had been  
Sacred to higher thoughts. But on her side  
Young Helen only felt an inward joy,  
And guessed not at its source, she was so young,  
And she had never known the witching calm  
Of love ; so when it came she could not think,  
But only feel—it was so beautiful.  
Beneath a shady tree she stayed to rest  
And rearrange the flowers, then suddenly  
Without a thought, looked up in Leonard's face.

What was it that she saw in his clear eyes,  
That sent the warm blood to her cheek and brow,  
And almost still'd the beating of her heart ?  
Ah, there's a language that all nations know,  
Unspoken though it be ! Who has not read  
Unutterable thoughts in one fond look,  
And felt the deep devotion of a heart,  
That ne'er was told in words. Helen had learnt  
This silent language ; and at first a thrill  
Of joy so exquisite ran through her frame,—  
She would have wept for very happiness,  
But came a thought, a heavy chilling thought,  
And settled on her heart, so suddenly—  
Like a great snowflake on an opening flower.  
With paling cheeks she stood, dropping her  
    flowers  
Unheeded on the ground ; until at last  
With a slight shiver and a sigh, she fled  
Past the bewildered Leonard, to her room,  
Fastened the door, locking without the scenes  
Of life and light, and feeling that the key  
Was grating in the wicket of her heart,  
Excluding joy for ever.  
It was a pleasant room, though it was small,  
A fit abode for peace and purity.  
But Helen lay despairing and alone,  
With no one near to cheer her on the path  
That duty told her she must surely tread,

However dark. She longed for one fond look  
From her dead mother, or one strengthening word.  
Slowly she rose, and shook the long black hair  
From her hot throbbing brow ; then tremblingly  
Took from its resting-place a little case,  
Opened, and lifted from its secret bed,  
A spray of cypress, crumbling into dust,  
Withered by time and death ; and long she gazed  
Upon its faded leaves ; and all the past—  
The stormy past, so full of cloud and sorrow,  
Rose from the grave, where she had thought it  
buried,

And stood before her with its spectral form,  
Casting an endless shadow on her path.  
She knew she loved with all her ardent soul,  
One being, and must sacrifice that love  
With its sweet promises of happiness,  
And follow out the lone and cheerless way  
Her feet had entered on, long years ago.  
She had not known her own weak woman's heart,  
But thought that she was stronger ; till one day  
She slept, and dreamt the dream of love, and woke  
Like Samson, shorn and weak, and sore perplexed.  
The hours crept by,—the sun's last ray had gone,  
The twilight deepened, and each little bird  
Had chirped its last " Good-night ;" and silently  
The sleepy stars awoke, and decked the sky.  
And slowly Helen rose, and stood beside



The window tearlessly. She almost seemed  
A star herself, so cold and calm and white,  
And yet so beautiful. Sadly she felt  
Her life's dream past, another life begun—  
But she was strong to meet the unknown years,  
For she had trampled on her sweetest joys,  
And counted them as worthless when compared  
With what she deemed her duty—duty, hard, cold  
word,

To weak and yielding hearts that only know,  
The impulse of the moment, but to Helen  
The messenger of strength. For she resolved  
That never would she bear within her breast  
A conscience fatal to her hopes of bliss,  
And not to hers alone, but to his too,  
When he should know the past. No, for the rich  
Rich treasure of his heart, she would not !  
She would content herself to be his friend ;  
Or may-be in the years to come, his sister,  
If he had learnt to think of little May,  
As now he thought of her. Could she not trust  
Her darling's happiness to him who seemed.  
So pure and holy in his earthly love ?  
Oh, yes ; but with this thought of May there came  
A bitterness she could not understand.  
She thought it must be selfishness, and sank  
Down on her knees beside the open window  
Praying the Lord to teach her to forget

Herself entirely,—and to live for duty.  
Just as she ceased May came into her room,  
And Helen smiled upon her tenderly—  
And took the rosy cheeks between her hands,  
And kissed them till the child looked up in wonder,  
For Helen seldom kissed. They joined the household,  
hold,

And like another evening passed that eve.  
Only the thoughtful Leonard marked the change  
In Helen ; pondering why she seemed afraid  
To meet his gaze.

Another morning dawned ; again the sun  
Came and concealed the stars as with a veil—  
A glorious veil of light. How beautiful  
Is an Australian morning ! Not a cloud  
Floats in the blue eternal depths above.  
Sparkling athwart the wild-bird's glancing wing  
A thousand colors mingle dazzlingly.  
There is a charm in all the nameless flowers  
That glitter in the grass like living things.  
There is a beauty in the shortening shades  
Cast by the grand old trees upon the ground.  
And oh ! the hills, the dim, the endless hills  
Silently slumb'ring in the pale blue light,  
Of morning and of distance ; solemnly  
Upraising to the sky their ancient heads  
In wordless praise.  
Night may have hours for prayer ;

But morning with a silent beckoning hand,  
Inviteth all to praise.  
Such was the morning and the peaceful scene,  
When Leonard from his troubled rest, arose  
Went forth into the air, and slowly strayed  
Down the neglected garden heedlessly,  
Unlistening to the clear and thrilling notes  
A choir of magpies warbled far away ;  
And marking not the stealthy shadows creep  
Beneath his feet. His heart was full of dreams,  
And all the world, its music and its beauty  
Were nothing to him then. He wandered down  
A path which led to a retired spot,  
Where sheltered from the sun, beneath the trees  
A rustic seat of twisted wattle stems  
Was placed invitingly. He noticed not  
Gleaming behind the trees, the fluttering folds  
Of Helen's dress,—till suddenly he stood  
Before her drooping form. The burning blood  
Rushed to her brow, and then returning, left  
It whiter than before. She rose to go ;  
But Leonard gently took her trembling hand,  
And bade her stay and listen while he told  
The story of his life. "Helen," he said,  
"A few short years ago, I had a mother ;  
A sister loved me, and all earth was bright,  
And I,—I loved it for its name was joy.  
I wished to live—I wished for nothing more ;

To live was to be happy and enjoy  
Earth's purest pleasures. Ah, we never see,  
The mystic finger writing on the wall  
Our future doom. The sister whom I loved  
Deeply—how deeply—faded day by day,  
And vanished in death's darkness,—followed soon  
By my fond mother. I was left alone,  
Alone, in the great world that I had loved—  
But ah! I hated now the very sun,  
And longed to pluck him from the mocking skies,  
And quench his light in everlasting gloom.  
I wished to die, but could not, so I lived  
Repining bitterly against my God,  
Till time had soothed, and I had learnt to look  
To the same hand that dealt the fearful blow  
For peace. At last it came. He taught me how  
To seek beyond this scene for happiness,  
And I lived on, calm with no earthly ties  
To bind me here below. I left the land  
Where first I saw the light, and came across  
Long leagues of sea, to this fair southern shore.  
I loved it not—all lands were one to me;  
I could have lived among the Esquimaux  
As happily. I did but live to die.  
Thus time went on, till one hot summer day  
I wandered in the woods, missed the right path  
And rested at a cottage. May I say  
All that I learnt to feel beneath its roof?

I met a proud dark eye, and saw it droop  
And soften as I gazed. I saw it filled  
With tears of pity, driven back again  
To the sealed fountain; and I saw it gleam  
With intellectual fire, as, oft at night  
We read together. And I loved, and love  
Deeper than e'er before. The earth once more  
Is smiling.—Helen tell me, say, oh say  
It does not smile in vain!"

"I cannot—No, I must not!" Helen cried—  
"I may not love you; yet alas I do—  
Go, Leonard, leave me, leave me, I will tell  
You all another time. Come to me here  
An hour ere sunset, and I will confess  
All the dark past; and you will see that never,  
Never, no never can I be your wife."

"Helen, you love me, it is all I ask—  
Nothing shall intervene between us now—  
Soon will you tell me of these fears; and I  
Will scatter them as does this merry wind  
Yon misty morning cloud."

It was a weary day, and yet it seemed  
As if the hours too fastly sped along,  
And brought the time dreaded by Helen near.  
She hastened to her still and quiet room—  
She longed to be alone to think and pray,  
But little May *would* come, and gently twine

Her arms about her neck, and ask her why  
She seemed so sad till she was forced to smile  
And say that she was well, and would ride forth.  
And so she went in search of solitude  
And found it on the hills, where the old trees  
With no leaf quivering, raised their noble heads  
In breathless silence; and the voiceless birds  
Folded their gilded wings, and seemed to sleep  
In the dark sultry shade. She found it where  
Down in the valley ran a cool clear stream,  
Choosing the softest paths, as if afraid  
To hear its own low music; and the clouds  
Seemed resting on the tree tops wearily—  
“Blest solitude,” said Helen; “nurse of strength,  
Rock me, oh rock me in thy quiet arms—  
Let me lie softly on thy pulseless breast,  
And by thy presence teach me to be strong!”  
Soon prayer and thought and solitude combined  
Brought power, and wreathed it round her shrink-  
ing heart;  
Like as a creeping plant entwines some tree,  
Stifling the tender buds with its embrace.  
Slowly she homeward turned, when the red sun  
Went down behind the sea. The hour drew  
nigh;  
At last it came, and down the winding path  
She crept with noiseless step, and reached the  
spot.

They met. She knew that they must meet no more.

She could not speak ; but gently round her waist  
She felt his arm was stealing tenderly,

And lower, lower drooped her aching head,

Till with a burst of quick ungoverned tears,

It rested on his breast ; but soon was past

That sudden storm of grief. She sat awhile

Silent, collecting all her new-born strength ;

Then in a low and faltering voice began :—

“ Five years have passed away since last I saw

My native land slowly recede and die

In the blue distance. ’Twas a lovely scene,

More beautiful than this. The forest-trees

Were greener and more varied in their tints.

The sky as bright and azure, and the flowers

As brilliant. Yes, America, my home,

Fair land of lakes and rivers, where the voice

Of nature has its myriad chords,—the sound

Of rushing waterfalls,—the silvery notes

Of birds,—the crashing of the forest trees

In the fierce grasp of storm,—the lulling voice

Of streams,—and the soft fall of withering leaves.

I often think I hear them even now

Those voices of my far off native land ;

And yet I would not leave these silent shores

To wander there again ! Stillness and peace

Have gathered round me here ; and memories,

So many bitter memories are there !  
Methinks each scene would bring them back  
again ;

But I am lingering,—as a traveller halts  
At the green foot of some steep precipice  
To listen to the sounds of peace, and pluck  
A few pale flowers, while striving to forget  
For one short moment, the rough path which he  
Must tread with bleeding feet.

My home had been  
A little cottage on a broad fair plain.  
In front the stretching sea had met my gaze  
Since first I saw the world with noting eyes.  
My father once a mariner, but now  
Living on shore, had with a sailor's taste,  
His house beside the sea ; and oft I loved  
To wander on the overhanging rocks,  
And gaze into the foaming waves beneath.  
The rocks rose round the coast for many a mile ;  
And only by a flight of steep rude steps  
Hewn in the slippery side, could the sea-shore  
Be gained. Ah, many, many a time have I  
Leaped like a chamois down the rugged stairs,  
Moved by a wild free spirit. I am changed  
Since then ! Well, far away behind the house  
Lay the green fields and peaceful villages.  
There was a little grave-yard, and a church  
Not far from us, and the tall cypresses



Would often fill my childish heart with awe.  
It was a peaceful scene that stretched around ;  
But ours, sad contrast, was a dreary home.  
I can remember in my earliest years,  
No one seemed happy. In my childish glee  
I'd go in quest of sympathy and smiles,—  
And tears would meet me. As I older grew,  
I learnt the cause of the unhallowed shade  
That hovered o'er our dwelling. 'Twas alas,  
My father!—

He was a tall dark man, with piercing eyes  
That shone from underneath his low'ring brows  
With fearful lustre ; and I never saw  
A loving look gleam from them ; never heard  
A loving word from that sarcastic lip.  
My mother, but I cannot paint her face  
With the hard pencil of mere words, although  
It seems as I had seen it yesterday.  
In the pale moon-light, I can see her stand  
With her soft shining hair and angel eyes—  
Did I say angel ? Angels never wear  
That shrinking, painful look poor mother wore.  
I had a sister too,—older than I ;

\* \* \* \* \*

When I was yet a child of tender years  
She was a lovely maiden of seventeen.  
May often makes me think of Emily ;  
She owned the same sweet eyes, and golden hair,

But she was paler, graver, and her face  
Had a deep, earnest look, which May has not.  
To this point of my life, I will return,  
And you must follow. I was, at the time,  
Ten years of age. I loved my mother well,  
My gentle sister, too, was dear to me,  
But oh, my father, I could never love.  
We were too similar ; for I was proud,  
I scarcely even feared him, but rebelled  
Against him daily ; and though in my heart  
My mother had such place, yet did I scorn  
Her very gentleness, when, day by day,  
I saw her bear, without an answering word,  
His harsh despising sneer, and blighting smile.  
My father lightly held our weaker sex ;  
And well do I remember the first time  
I learnt that I was born to be despised.  
My mother had presumed to offer help,  
And timid counsel ; but the storm which broke  
Above her head, the storm of bitter words  
Hurried her shrinking, trembling from the room ;  
And I,—I heard it, heard the cruel taunt  
Of womanhood flung at her. ‘How could she,  
A senseless thing, created but to be  
The plaything or the slave of man, thus dare  
To set her thoughts on equal ground with his ?’  
Oh ! Leonard, I can never, never tell  
The sea of passion that usurped my soul,

And filled the empty fountains, that had been  
Waiting for pure sweet streams to tenant them.  
The bitter waters came ; I felt them rise,  
Till every vein throbbed with the acrid stream.  
Away to the rock steps I madly flew,  
And, to and fro, roamed on the silent shore.  
' Was it for this,' I cried, ' was it for this,  
That life was given me ? Was it, then, for this,  
That charms of face were mine ; that I might hope  
To please the idle taste of some proud man ?  
Was it for this my intellect was given,  
Merely to teach me how to smile and talk,  
To sing and dress, and kiss, and seem to love,  
And practice woman's fascinating arts ?'  
My proud young soul rebelled ; I nursed my pride,  
And fostered it with care ; and day by day  
It grew upon me, filling all my heart  
With keen and vain resentment.

At this time,

A change came o'er my sister, she became  
More silent, yet seemed happy, and would sit  
For hours, or on the lonely moonlit sands  
Would wander—not alone, no, not alone ;  
She loved, and deemed a faithful heart was hers,  
Because a pair of darkly gleaming eyes  
Looked love into her own ; because a voice  
In tender accents uttered tender words.  
Ah, she was dreaming happy, foolish dreams ;

Yet 'twas not sleep that painted them so fair,  
Would that it had been, for then perchance might  
• she

Have waked to find it morning,—cold and dark,  
But still a morning. When she did awake,  
She found an endless midnight. It was thus  
It happened :—

Harold left her, as he said  
For a few weeks, with many a parting kiss,  
And many a solemn vow of constancy.  
And all day long she wandered on the beach,  
Watching and waiting, till her cheek grew white,  
And untold sorrow dimmed her gentle eyes.  
I tried to teach that lesson never taught,  
The long hard lesson of forgetfulness.  
I tried to teach her how to love the sea,  
For its own beauty ; but she cared for it  
Only because its waves had heard *his* voice,  
And now seemed echoing back the whispered  
words.

I pointed to the stars ; and she was angry  
That now they shone as brightly as when he  
Had gazed with her on them. Why were they  
there,

When *he* had left ? Thus the weeks went on,  
Till one dark evening, as we sat within  
The cottage, while abroad a thunderstorm  
Was raging wildly o'er the maddened sea,

And bursting on our roof with deafening noise,  
A letter came ; it was for Emily,  
And eagerly she broke the well-known seal.  
Twas from her Harold. Silently she read,  
And paler grew her cheek, her brow, her lip,—  
Until at length her hand released its hold,  
And she sank fainting, with a low sad cry.  
My mother raised her in her tender arms,  
And rocked her on her breast, as if again  
She were a little child. My father stooped,  
And took the letter ; with his bitter smile  
He read aloud the cruel heartless words,  
Then flung it in the fire ; and as it burnt,  
It seemed as if each line had been transferred  
From the dry shrivelled ashes to my heart.  
Yes I remember every cruel word  
That Harold wrote ; and how I hated him  
With loathing hatred. ‘He,’ the letter said,  
‘Loved Emily no longer. In the past  
Aided by twilight skies and moonlight scenes,  
Romantic rambles, and the murmuring sea,  
He had once thought he cared for her, but time  
Had caused these dreams to fade ; life had begun  
For him in earnest, and the foolish days  
Now gone must never be remembered more.’  
Alas ! for Emily ! we laid her down,  
Silent and death-like on her little bed.  
She spoke not, murmured not but only clasped

My mother with a lingering fond embrace ;  
And said " Good night ;" it was a last farewell !  
In the still midnight hour, a soft cold lip  
Met mine. I wakened with a sudden start,  
And saw her standing in the white moonlight  
Beside the bed ; and gazing down on me  
With sad despairing eyes. She stooped again,  
And whispered : " Helen, never, never love !"  
And then she kissed me with her ashy lips,  
And pressed me in her arms, and said " Good bye.'"  
I know not why it was,—I could not move.  
Till she had passed without the open door,  
And vanished in the darkness ; then I sprang  
Up from the couch, and listened breathlessly,  
With a vague fear for her returning step.  
I called her softly, but no answer came,  
Then followed all along the passage dark,  
And saw her not ; but as I reached the end,  
A sound as of a softly-opened door  
Came to my ear. I followed still, and found  
The outer gate was standing open wide,  
And she had left the house,—  
I looked around,  
And thought I saw a glimpse of her white robe  
Gliding away in the dim misty light.  
The storm was o'er, the sea had hushed its voice  
To a hoarse gurgling whisper, and the clouds  
Scattered and broken, struggled with the wind,

While the full moon looked out and seemed to  
smile ;  
And by her glimmering help, as swift I ran,  
I saw the ghost-like form of Emily !  
But oh, my heart grew sick to mark her speed.  
Faster and faster toward the gloomy deep.  
I called her faintly, but my voice was choked,  
I could but follow. On, still on, she went,—  
Until upon a steep projecting rock,  
That overhung the fierce and angry sea,  
She paused. Oh ! I shall never lose that scene ;  
The bright full moon shedding its chilly light  
Upon the bare white feet and fluttering robe,  
As motionless she stood, her streaming hair  
Floating upon the wind. I called her name,  
And could have almost touched her, being so near.  
She turned and looked on me, with such a look,  
So full of blank despair ! then raised her hands  
Toward the starry dome ; and with a sigh  
So deep—the waves themselves stood still to hear,  
Vanished for ever in the dark abyss !  
With a wild cry I bounded to the edge !  
And gazed into the foaming, gurgling brine.  
The moon shone brightly, and the waves moaned  
on  
As if nought but a fragment of the rock  
Had sunk beneath. A chilly shudder crept  
O'er all my frame. I recollect no more.

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Ten years have passed, but I remember well  
The hour of waking from that dreamless sleep.  
I was again within my little room ;  
And by the bed, a gentle watcher stood.  
My tongue could scarcely utter the one word  
“Mother,”—but she had heard it, and a smile  
Lighted her face with a bright ray of joy.  
She said I had been ill for many weeks,  
Since they had found me in the chilly morn,  
Senseless and dripping with the early dew,  
Beside the rock’s steep edge.

She told me all .

Her fearful agony for Emily,  
And how when days had past, the pitying sea  
Had borne her body near the rugged steps,  
And they had found it. The bright golden hair  
Mingled with sea-weed, and upon her brow  
A gaping gash cut by some pointed rock.  
And they had laid her in the still churchyard  
Beneath an ancient cypress. Last of all.  
She told me God who took her from our hearts,  
Had sent another for us both to love ;  
And then she showed me May, soft crying thing  
Lying all helpless in her sheltering arms.  
And as I looked, a new strange tender love  
Sprung up within my empty heart for her.  
And day by day she grew, and day by day  
My love for her increased ; but Emily

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Still lingered in my thoughts, like a pure star  
In the dim sky of morning. Many a time  
I wandered on the overhanging rock,  
And tortured my young heart with memories.  
And in those hours, the hatred in my soul  
For Harold swelled and strengthened; and I heard  
That he had wedded and was happy now,—  
While Emily was lying lone and cold  
Beneath the mournful cypress.—

Thus the time

Wore slowly on. My father every year  
Grew harsher, till at length he never spoke  
Without a sneer, and filled the house with those  
He called his friends. He would not deign to find  
A friend in her who linked her life with his,  
And loved him still, though he had changed since  
first

He won her girlish heart. She trusted him  
In those bright days when he knelt at her feet  
And pleaded as a suitor only pleads,  
And painted pictures of the future scenes,  
When they should be companions one in soul.  
She entered on a dreary waste with him,  
And he had pointed to the placid lakes  
That glistened in the distance,—never gained—  
It was but a mirage; yet she toiled on  
With panting heart, asking in vain a drop  
Of love's sweet water.

Mine was a different heart, I never longed  
For love ; I thirsted for respect, and wished  
To stand on equal ground with man. I felt  
A mind within me struggling hard to pierce  
Unfathomed depths of wisdom ; and I scorned  
The sensual grovelling aims of those who called  
Each other man ; and then the galling thought  
That they despised me, and the bitter sense  
Of woman's weakness,—weakness to revenge !  
I could but render pride, for pride, and scorn,  
The foolish scorn of a high-hearted girl.  
My father seemed to read my bitter thoughts,  
And pleased himself with humbling, as he said,  
My haughty spirit ; but he only fanned  
The burning embers. I had nearly reached,  
At this point of my tale, my fifteenth year.  
My mother had been drooping. Day by day  
I watched her fading, but I never thought  
That death would come so soon. Alas, he came  
With quick and certain footstep ; and one night  
I sat alone beside her in the gloom,  
With sad forebodings resting on my heart,  
Like clouds upon the ocean. Suddenly  
She kissed me gently, and in loving tones  
Said :—‘ Helen, I have waited for this hour  
With anxious waiting. I have longed to speak  
Some solemn warning words before I die.—  
Yes I am dying,—leaving all behind

That I have dearly cherished ; hastening to  
The land, where love is pure and free from sin.  
Ah, earthly passion is a bitter fruit,  
A bitter, bitter fruit, though fair to see,  
Whose name is disappointment. Woman's lot  
Is hard and toilsome to a heart like yours.  
The virtues you should wear are ever these,  
Endurance, patience, and humility.  
Oh ! Helen, keep them always in your breast  
Or never wed ; for life is misery  
When two unbending wills are waging war ;  
One soul *must* bow, one mind must lower itself.  
When I was young, I dreamt a foolish dream :  
Methought I saw two beings hand in hand,  
Go wandering down the living way of life.  
Methought that I would follow with the one  
That I had chosen, but I quickly found  
The path divided, and the space between  
Too wide for hands to meet. Helen, my child,  
A woman when she weds, must willingly  
Consent to sink into a mindless shade ;  
To follow in man's steps, and turn with him,  
Reflect his image, and obey his will.  
My darling you are very beautiful ;  
Many will seek you. Oh, remember then  
Your mother's dying words.' With a faint sigh  
She sank upon the pillows, and I stood  
Speechless, but with unutterable thoughts.

Pride, hatred, and rebellion in my soul.  
Never, no never, could my spirit bow,  
'Never, no never, could I meekly stand  
Like a blank wall, and echo back the sounds  
That reached me. I must live, think, speak and  
act  
All for myself,—and so must never wed.'

Another day returned, another night,  
Another morning, and I 'woke to find  
That I was motherless. In the dark hours  
The noiseless angel came, and gently took  
The tired spirit home, and I was left  
With little May in the still house of death ;  
I never had seen death, had never looked  
Upon a soulless body. Now I stood  
Tearless and horror-stricken by the bed,—  
And felt alone, all utterly alone.  
I kissed the pallid lips and fondly thought,  
I could be happy, if they did but speak  
One little word,—if I might only hear  
A murmured blessing in her gentle voice.  
My father entered, pale, but coldly calm,  
He stood and gazed upon the quiet face,  
That used to meet him with a tender smile,  
But now lay stilled for ever, smileless, cold.  
Without a kiss, without a tear, he turned,  
And left the gloomy chamber.

How I spurned the proud man from my heart !  
The only tie that bound me now was snapt.  
I almost felt that he had murdered her ;  
For she'd have lived, if cherished by his love.  
But she was dead, and I had only May  
To love and live for now. And suddenly  
A strange, strong purpose rushed into my soul.  
Yes, I would live for May, and never wed,  
No, never ! Deeper grew the fixed thought.

They came,

And bore away the form of her I loved  
To the old waiting cypress. I had looked  
My last upon her face, and thought that all  
The tears and pain of life for her had vanished.  
The yearning heart that thirsted here for love,  
Was drinking at the everlasting wells.  
Death is as real as is future life ;  
But ah, the body's death is visible,  
And not the spirit's life ! 'Tis hard to feel  
Those whom we love have risen to the sky,  
When the same form they wore is with us still.  
The day was hot and sultry,—heavy clouds  
Hung from the sunless heavens. I stood and gazed  
Upon the little band that bore away  
My mother, and the first wild burst of tears  
That I could shed, rushed from my scorching eyes ;  
And then I sat and thought of all the past,  
Of all the dreary future, and of May ;

And then of my poor mother's dying words,  
And lastly of my purpose. As I sat  
I heard my father's footstep; he had come  
Back from the solemn service. Little May  
Tired out with weeping, rested peacefully;  
I, only I, had something yet to do.  
The sun had slowly sunk, the moon arose  
Upon the sullen sea, and all around  
Seemed gloomy as my heart. Across the wave  
Incessant lightning flashed, yet not a drop  
Had fallen from the black, unbroken clouds.  
'Twas a fit night for me; it suited well  
The stormy passions raging in my breast.  
With noiseless step I left the house, and turned  
Toward the darkly slumbering churchyard—  
On I went,  
Heaven's flashing torches lighting me the path.  
I passed beneath a willow's drooping boughs,  
To the tall, spiral cypress, at whose foot  
Rested my mother's and my sister's forms.  
I halted. There they were, those narrow mounds;  
One covered with the grass of many springs,  
The other newly made, and damp and brown.  
I knelt beside them, tried in vain to speak,—  
Words rushed in a quick torrent to my lips,  
But drowned each other in a long low moan.  
At length, they slower came: 'Mother,' I cried,  
'If from thy home, beyond th' electric fires

That pierce the brooding clouds, beyond the stars  
Beyond the misty atmosphere of earth,  
Thou may'st look down, look down, and hear me  
now ;

Witness my words, as here beside thy grave,  
I vow that I will never wed, but live  
For May, and strive to keep her from the snares  
Of love. My mother, I could never be  
The wife you painted with your dying words ;  
Therefore I kneel beside you, ere the grass  
Has grown above your head, and vow that time  
Shall ever find me walking life alone ;  
And thou, oh God ! who gavest me woman's form,  
And woman's curse, record my solemn words  
In heaven, and blight me with Thy sorest woe  
If I should e'er forget my solemn oath."  
The words had scarcely left my trembling lips  
When suddenly a flash of lightning blazed  
Round the old cypress, rending it in twain,  
And scattering in the air, and on the graves,  
The shattered fragments ; while the thunder  
pealed  
And rattled o'er my head. I hid my face  
In the long grass,—it was too terrible,  
For a young heart like mine.

The drenching rain  
Poured down upon me. As I raised my head  
The thunder's last faint echo died away,

But still the rain descended. O'er the sea  
The moon was shining ; by the shimmering light  
I gathered from my mother's sodden grave,  
A spray of the torn cypress, whispering thus :  
' Be thou my witness, and in days to come,  
Remind me of this hour.' Then hurried home  
To the dark silent house and slumbering May.  
How peacefully she slept ! Her golden hair,  
Falling in shining ripples o'er her cheek ;  
The crimson baby-lips, half opening  
As if expecting kisses, and the eyes  
That even when concealed by their white lids  
Seemed ever smiling. Oh, I stood and gazed,  
And all the love that death had given back,  
The love I'd borne my mother, came and twined  
Around my little sister.

Leonard, I've very little more to tell,  
My father soon got weary of the spot.  
I know not if his gentle wife's sad face,  
Haunted the old familiar scenery.  
He came one day, and told me we must leave  
Our native land ; and so we said ' Farewell.'  
My mother's grave was all I had to leave,  
And bitter memories hovered even there.  
The night before we sailed, I knelt again  
Beside the mound, now overgrown with grass,  
And pledged once more my vow. The quiet stars  
Looked down like calm recorders.



Months went by,  
Australia smiled upon us, and I felt  
More happy in my peaceful southern home.  
It was a quiet haven, where I might  
With safety shelter from the world's rude storms.  
A year, and then my erring father died ;  
And uncle Bernard came to live with us.  
A few more years—my tale is almost done—  
Then came the summer evening when I saw  
The only man my proud heart ever loved.  
Yes, Leonard, I have loved you, though I tried  
To hate you for your sex. In those calm hours,  
When watching o'er you, pity came and sprang  
Within my breast, as does a tender plant  
In stony places ; and it grew in strength,  
Until it blossomed, blossomed into love.  
But there were clouds around my desert heart ;  
I could not understand the tender flower  
That budded in the darkness : and I thought  
That I was merely glad that the world held  
One being worthy of the name of man.  
Ah ! Leonard, when I think of all the hours  
You've spent with me, I wonder not I loved ;  
I could not hate you when you spoke of heaven,  
And those who watched and waited for you there.  
I could not hate you when you tried to lead  
My weary heart to Him who loved the world,  
And gave His life to save it from its doom.

I could not hate you when you taught me how  
To love the loving Saviour. No, ah, no ;  
In loving Him *you* loved, I learnt to prize  
My gentle teacher. Leonard, they are past ;  
Those precious hours that you have spent with me ;  
But they have left a memory behind,  
And they have given a never-dying hope  
Of future happiness ; regret them not.  
And Leonard, tell me not that I have sinned  
In those dark hours of pride, I know it well.  
But I have suffered, and am suffering still,—  
Yet even now, I feel I could not be  
A woman like my mother, nor could own  
That God created woman but to live  
The plaything or the menial slave of man ;  
Beneath him far in intellectual powers ;  
Made but to pander to his lowest wants,  
And go, no further.— Surely other work  
Is hers to do,—to share his deepest cares,—  
To sympathize in all his highest schemes—  
To be his closest friend, and yet to look  
To him as still the head. This might I be  
To you but for the past, the fatal past.  
I cannot, no I cannot break my vow !  
It was the maddened impulse of a heart  
Where pride and hatred reigned, that prompted  
it ;  
But it can never, never be recalled.”

And thus was finished, Helen's long sad tale ;  
And silently the crescent moon sailed on ;  
And gently whispered, all the little leaves  
As they had done before, all heedless they  
Of those two beating hearts, whether they thrilled  
With joy or sorrow. Still, how still, they sat,  
And Leonard spoke not for a while one word,  
He could not tempt, he would not add the pain,  
Of vain regrets. At length he gently said,  
" God bless thee, Helen, and forgive the past ;"  
Then passionately clasped her to his breast,  
And pressed upon her lips one long, long kiss,—  
The first, last kiss of love. " Helen be sure  
We'll meet again. Farewell, till then farewell !"  
So Leonard's arms released their eager hold.  
And Helen, when she looked, saw he was gone.—  
Oh, darkness, silence, cover grief so deep !  
Words are but mockery, when used to paint  
The soul's unutterable hidden woe !

Six years have passed away since last we saw  
The peaceful cottage sleeping in the sun.  
Six years have past away since last we watched  
The moonlight glimmering o'er the misty hills.  
The spot is still the same,—they are not changed,  
Those dim old hills. The very trees are still  
Singing the same old tune. The same blue sky  
Looks down, and smiles and frowns, and weeps.

## The fields

Are yellow with December's ripening sheaves.  
The cot, white-fronted, with its garden slope ;  
The green acacias and neglected walks ;—  
Are still the same. Beneath a spreading tree,  
A tiny mound, scarcely perceptible—  
Save for a smooth round stone placed at its head,  
Marks the old magpie's grave. With many a  
tear,  
Bright little May had carried from the brook,  
Her friend and playmate's tombstone.

## In the shade,

Winks the old drowsy watch-dog, and close by,  
Stands May, the little May of other years.  
How changed, yet beautiful and child-like still.  
Within the cottage sits a white-haired man ;  
His eyes are dim with age ; and by his side,  
A slender form is bending, and a voice  
Soft as the zephyr's murmur, reads aloud  
The sacred book of God ; and as she reads,  
Her speaking tears are falling on the page.  
The sun is slowly sinking in the west.  
'Tis summer, but a cool refreshing breeze  
Enters the open door ; the old man sleeps ;  
She shuts the Book, to watch the shadows fall ;  
Then as the moon just peeps above the hill,  
She leaves the room, and wanders down the path,  
To the old garden-seat. She is not changed,

Save that a gentler look lives in her eyes,  
And from her cheek the last faint tint is gone ;  
She thinks of a calm evening long ago,—  
A summer evening, and a sad farewell.  
She thinks of the prophetic earnest words  
“We’ll meet again,” and lifts her eyes to heaven.  
There is a footstep on the withered grass,—  
Nearer it comes. No, it is not young May’s!  
She turns, and there is Leonard! They have  
met,  
Just as they parted, in the evening light.  
“Leonard,” she whispered, “I have prayed each  
day  
To see you once again, but once again.  
Oh! I have longed to listen to your words,  
As pants the bird in summer’s burning noon,  
For the cool murmur of the evening’s breath.”  
“Helen,” he said,—his voice was low and weak,  
“We have but met to part, for now I come  
To bid a long farewell. I come to die.”  
She shuddered as she gazed upon his face,  
So pale and sunken in the pallid light.  
“Yes, dear one, I am come to die beside  
The one with whom fate would not have me live.  
Ah, Helen, God is wise. I would have loved  
The earth too fondly, had its joys been mine.  
He gave me friends; I thought the world was  
heaven,

And never looked beyond.—He took them back,  
Heaven grew the dearer, and the earth less  
bright.

I loved you, and the fibres of my heart  
Clung once again to earth. He thwarted me,  
And taught me not to live for happiness ;  
And so I tried to live for duty's sake,  
And all the while my heart was craving joy.  
My heart was hard,—but I am dying now,  
And I am happy—happy in the thought.  
But tell me, Helen, you will meet me there,  
Beyond the mists of sin that cloud our eyes ;  
And then our earthly past shall be forgot,  
As in the morning we forget the night,  
With all its troublous dreams and gloomy fears.  
Oh, that bright morning, when the shades of earth,  
Shall flee away ! My Helen, will you come ?”  
Softly she whispered—“ Yes, I long to go,  
But God has left me yet a work on earth.  
Life is not mere existence, and each soul  
Has work assigned it to perform on earth.  
Thus I must live until my task is done—  
Oh, tempt me not to wish it over now.”

And once again they read the same old books ;  
And once again they stood at eventide,  
Beneath the same green trees, and spoke of  
heaven ;

And every thought was holy. Heaven was near  
To Leonard. Day by day, she watched  
His eye grow dimmer, and his step more slow.  
She knew the hour approached when they must  
part.

Beside the open window, one still eve  
Lay Leonard. Helen knelt before the couch,  
And held his thin cold hand within her own.  
The sun had disappeared, but in the west  
Had painted scenes of glory as he went;  
And little stars came sprinkling o'er the sky,  
Like frozen raindrops. Not a sound disturbed  
The air of twilight, save the labouring breath  
Of Leonard.— „Helen, are you there?” he said,  
“Come nearer! It is growing dark. The sun  
Has set; I watched him sinking, 'tis the last  
That I shall see. In heaven there is no sun;  
No glimmering twilight, and no tearful stars;  
All light, the light of God, Himself the sun.  
Oh Helen, I am going, going there.  
I see it even now,—that glorious Light,  
My Saviour—Hark, He calls me, I must go.”  
Colder and colder grew the trembling hand;  
Lower and lower, drooped the weary head;  
Closer, and closer, Helen twined her arms;  
It was a last embrace,—Leonard was dead.  
They buried him far, far away from her.

She did not know the spot where he was laid,  
And scarcely wished to ; every shining star  
Pointed to where he lived. She mourned for him ;  
But murmured not. And May, bright happy May,  
May still was hers to live for and to love.  
And there were memories, sad but gentle thoughts,  
Of vanished hours. Each little nameless flower  
That they had seen together, spoke of him.  
The blackened stump, where they had stayed to  
rest ;

Each withered rustling leaf and mossy stone,  
Or tiny creeping insect, told of him.  
*He* saw them once ; and they had still remained,  
While the immortal soul had passed away.  
Yet would he live, when these had gone from  
earth.

They had outlived the body ; but the soul—  
Oh glorious thought—could never, never die.  
And so the struggle of her life is o'er.  
She is content to live—resigned to die.  
Calmly she holds her course. It is not hard.  
The moon is lighted in her once black sky,  
And glimmers o'er her path no longer dark.



## THE VOICES OF THE ALMOND TREES.

I AM sitting alone 'neath the almond trees  
In the dusky gloom of a summer night ;  
And there's scarcely a sound save the evening  
breeze  
That glides thro' the branches with footstep  
light.

It is passing away, but the troubled tree  
Is rustling, trembling, murmuring still.  
I listen and think, till it seemeth to me,  
That whispering voices its branches fill.

They are flinging around me memory's spell,  
And leading me back to the days gone by,  
When I thought that the life which I loved so  
well,  
Was as free from gloom as a summer sky.

They are singing the songs which I loved to sing,  
In the sunny hours of childhood's glee ;  
And I quite forget 'tis the zephyr's wing  
That rustles the leaves of the almond tree.

They are whispering now of the weary hours  
When the clouds arose in my azure sky,  
And I thought that my hopes like the almond flowers  
Had blossomed only to fall and die.

They are singing of joy and sighing of woe,  
That the future years have in store for me ;  
But their voices have sunk to a whisper low,  
And all they are telling is mystery !

## THE SONG OF A LIFE.

I DREAMT of a song, a sad, sad song ;  
     It stole thro' my sleep  
     With tones so deep  
 'That the echoes loved it and kept it long,  
     Repeating again  
     The soft low strain  
 Till I woke and remembered its gentle pain ;  
     And all day long  
     It haunts my brain,—  
                     This song.

The moon is above the hill, mother ;  
     A ray of its gentle light,  
 Has silently come like a blessing  
     To comfort the earth this night.  
 But my heart seems like a valley  
     Where the moonbeams never play,  
 All sad with the gay world round it,  
     All dark in the midst of day.  
 Yes, the earth may be full of gladness,  
     But what is its joy to me ?—  
 The brighter the sun shines out, mother,  
     The darker the shades will be.

And I'm walking now in the shadows  
By the very brightness cast.  
I've been looking far in the future,  
To see whether joy will last ;  
And I find it is ever fading  
As the weary years go by.  
I fear I shall live to feel, mother,  
Life but a long-drawn sigh.  
When the arms that clasp me now, mother,  
And the hearts I call my own  
Leave me, poor me, in the world, mother,  
In the wide, wide world alone.  
When my heart, like a field in summer,  
Is burnt with the world's hot breath,  
And the flowers that bloomed in the spring time,  
Have drooped 'neath its touch of death.  
Oh, they must all come to me, mother,  
The sorrows that others know ;  
Let me die before they come, mother ;  
I'm wearying now to go.

## THOUGHTS ON ENDING THE YEAR 1862.

(THE YEAR OF THE COTTON FAMINE.)

How stealthily the old year dies,  
 We may not catch his parting sighs,  
 Or even on the withered grass,  
 Hear a retreating footstep pass,  
     And yet we know  
 This old old year has reached his time to go.

We know, for now the summer's breath,  
 Has touched each hill and vale with death;  
 And where the winter flowers have been,  
 And where the grass grew soft and green,  
     'Tis brown and dry,  
 And nature, with the old year, seems to die.

Oh dying year, would that thy hours  
 Had only brought the death of flowers,  
 Had only hushed each murmuring stream  
 And lent the sun a fiercer beam;  
     It might not be,  
 Old year, I crave a long account of thee.

What hast thou brought? methinks I hear  
Come echoing through the atmosphere,  
Sad sounds; they tell me of a land  
Where death walks o'er the blood-stained strand,  
    And claims his own,  
'Mid sword and fire and many a dying groan.

What hast thou brought? there is a shore  
Where sounds of battle come no more;  
Yet weeping eyes are growing dim,  
And voices fail in the evening hymn;  
    While thousands cry  
But no answer comes from the wintry sky.

Yes, and in every land the gloom  
The whispered tones, the darkened room  
Have told; to some, this year will be  
A tear-stained leaf of memory,  
    Sacred and sealed,  
For evermore, its sadness unrevealed.

Oh fleeting year, sad are the things  
Brought on thy sorrow-laden wings;  
Yet there was gladness mixed with pain,  
And some may turn to look again  
    On vanished hours,  
Which thy kind hand had richly strewn with  
    flowers.

And there were mercies ; day by day  
God set His angels on the way  
To guard the many to the end  
Of this small space of time, and send  
    Some sad ones home,  
Where pain and death and sorrow never come.

Old year, good-bye ; thou hast done well ;  
God willed it so,—and none may tell,  
The hidden mysteries of His will,  
Which time exists but to fulfil ;  
    And we rejoice  
That all is ordered by a Father's voice.

## A WALK IN THE ADELAIDE CEMETERY.

It was the Sabbath-day : a holy calm  
Pervaded all things ; e'en the busy town  
Was hushed, and nothing broke the stillness round,  
Save the soft chiming of the Sabbath-bell.  
I speeded forth, and wandered far away  
To where the city lays her loved and lost ;  
Where those who once had walked her busy  
streets,  
And listened to the sound of the sweet bell,  
And hoped, and feared, and suffered, loved, and  
died,  
Lay all forgotten in that silent place.  
Oh, 'tis a lovely spot, and every tree  
Sighs a low dirge for some who sleep beneath,  
And seems to whisper to the listening ear  
Of worn and weary ones, now all at rest.  
I wandered on, and gazed upon the tombs  
Of many a one once dear, and read the lines  
"To a Beloved Wife." They tell me, though,  
Her place on earth is by another filled,  
And that the man she thought was all her own



Forgets her now, and whispers the soft tale  
Of love into another's listening ear.  
Her children call another woman "Mother,"  
And scarcely know that in the cold grave-yard,  
There lies the form of her who gave them birth.  
Oh, what is love, that in so short a time  
Remembers not, but, like the butterfly,  
Forgets the withered bud that yesterday  
It loved to linger on, and flies away  
To seek for sweets in other, fairer, flowers.  
And yet I cannot think 'tis always so.  
There is a love, a pure and lasting thing,  
Not published to the world in vain display,  
But cherished in the truly faithful heart,  
E'en when the cherished one has passed from  
earth.

Far, as I wandered on, I found a spot,  
All bare and sandy; not a tree was there  
To whisper of the dead or point to heaven,  
And tell of rest from sorrow, toil and sin.  
Yet there a little mound scarce three feet long  
Was made, and at the head of it a wreath was  
hung,  
A wreath of evergreens that morning twined.  
And, as I looked, I pictured gentle hands,  
Twining this token of their lasting love,  
And looking up to heaven. Oh, holier far  
It seemed to me than all the tombs around,

With their unmeaning mockery of praise,  
And tales of sorrow healed long years ago.  
I left the spot. Perhaps I never more  
The little humble grass-grown grave may see,  
But memory sometimes will that hour recal,  
And when, perchance, I think that love is dead,  
Will whisper of the wreath of evergreens.

## NO ROOM FOR THE DEAD.

HUSH! In the dim sad twilight of this room  
 The softest breath is heard, and through the gloom  
 Sounds like a discord in some solemn air.  
 Tread lightly here, it seemeth holy ground,  
 And all the heavy atmosphere around,  
 Is burdened,—burdened with unanswered prayer!  
 Ah, how the mother prayed as the days went by,  
 Each moment stealing from her little one  
 Some touch of life,—the bright light from the  
     eye,  
 The smile, the roundness, till death's work was  
     done!  
 Ah, how she prayed—"I cannot let her go,  
 "Spare, spare my darling one!" but God said  
     "No;  
 She shall be Mine, and I will gently bear  
 Her with Me where I go.—Would'st thou come  
     there;  
 Her little footprints see, like stars I've given  
 To guide thee in thine upward path to heaven."  
 And so He took her in His bosom kind,  
 And wrapped around the mantle of His love;

Leaving the lone ones in the mist behind,  
To gaze, with watching aching eyes, above.  
And they will watch and weep one lonely night,  
Until the morning comes and brings the light.  
Then, the glad world, released from sorrow's veil,  
Will tell once more its old enchanted tale;  
And with its eager hands again restore,  
The joy they thought was buried evermore;  
For there is no eternity of love,—  
No hearts on earth that live with those above.

It was but yesterday a mother died;  
And the bereaved nurslings left behind,  
Clustered together by the bed, and cried  
With a vague sorrow faint and undefined.  
And for a little while they still will miss  
The gentle rocking on her soft warm breast,  
The murmured singing or the "Good-night" kiss  
That hushed them, oh so tenderly to rest.  
But soon the air is full of merry laughter,  
The child-heart has forgotten all its pain :—  
There is no lingering grief—no longing after  
The mother that can never come again.

'Twas only yesterday a young wife died,  
Died in the midst of gladness—a sweet bride  
Bound in the bands of earth's most tender tie.  
A heart all full of its earthly love,

Too strong for the powers of life to move,  
Living for happiness, learnt to die ;  
And a sad one sits in his desolate home,  
And waits for a morrow that will not come,  
Watches and waits till his eyes grow dim,  
For his angel-bride to return for him.  
But the heart must outlive its bitterest grief  
And sorrow and suffering find relief ;  
And in after years could her spirit come,  
To seek for a place in its earthly home,  
With a heart brimful of the love of old,  
That even the grave could not chill to cold,  
Would she find a welcome waiting her there,  
And outstretched arms and a vacant chair ?  
Could she nestle down by his side once more,  
And claim the love that was hers before,  
And receive it again as full and free,  
Hers—all hers, to eternity ?  
No,—Spirit stretch upward thy quivering wing,  
For thy name on earth's a forgotten thing ;  
The love that was thine is given away,  
And there is not a whisper to bid thee stay,  
From the bliss of the *present* the *past* has fled,  
And our glorious world has no place for the dead !  
Yes, the earth is bright,  
And hearts are light ;  
And none would know  
That years ago

A grave was made,  
And a loved one laid  
Away from the sorrowing sight.  
For flowers have grown,  
Where tears were sown,  
And memories die  
As the years go by,  
Till the living have said,  
"No room for the dead  
"In this beautiful world of our own.  
"No room for the stars in a mid-day sky,  
"No room for the grass with the garden flowers ;  
"No room for the tears in a joyful eye,  
"No room for the *dead* in this world of ours."

## TO A FRIEND, ON PARTING.

GOOD-BYE, my friend, I say it with a smile,  
Yet cannot keep a sadness from my heart,  
And though 'tis only for a little while  
The rising tear-drops tell 'tis hard to part.

We have gone on together, as two streams  
That murmured to each other pleasantly,  
Stirred by one breeze, feeling the same kind  
beams,  
And the same shadows—now thou'rt leaving me.

And I must miss thee, miss thy kindly voice,  
As onward in my lonely course I glide,  
And I must learn to sorrow and rejoice  
Without my friend to listen by my side.

But we shall meet,—now winter's wind moans by,  
And the green hills drink in life-giving rain,  
Now gloomy clouds have crowded to the sky ;  
Ere summer warms the grass, we'll meet again.

Oh, there are partings sadder far than mine,  
When into one two loving hearts have grown,  
Like colours in a rainbow, where the line  
That makes them two, is hidden and unknown.

When long long years must darkly intervene,  
And sorrow checks the parting words unsaid,  
The sad heart sickens, as waves stretch between,  
And trembles lest its prayers be for the dead.

But there are partings sadder e'en than this,  
And the strong frame and hopeful heart must  
bow  
When the cold lips give no returning kiss,  
And a dark shadow rests upon the brow.

When the last gleam has faded from the eye,  
And the red blood is frozen at the heart;  
When the beloved has known what 'tis to die,  
And the forsaken what it is to part.

My friend, the memory of such parting hours,  
Takes from the future all that makes it bright;  
But at a separation short as ours,  
I will not say "Farewell;" 'tis but "Good-  
night."



## THE FLOW'RET.

I've severed from its parent tree  
This simple little flower,  
And send across the stormy sea  
The blossom of an hour.

Accept it, dearest, from my hand,  
And it shall bear to thee  
Low whisperings from a distant land,  
Soft silent words from me.

'Twill whisper of a time to come,  
When thou shalt cross the sea,  
And gather from her childhood's home,  
A flow'ret from the tree.

'Twill tell thee how that little flower,  
Transplanted by thy hand  
Will fade within an unknown bower,  
Upon an unknown strand ;

If not protected by thy love,  
And cherished by thine eye  
'Twill fold its with'ring leaves above  
Its breaking heart—and die.

## ON THE DEATH OF THE REV. MR. STOW. \*

For ever from the care and pain of life,  
 He whom we all have known and loved has  
     pass'd ;  
 Gone is its sorrow, gone its weary strife,  
 And one more soul has found a home at last.  
     Not dead, he sleeps ;  
 And God Himself His resting servant keeps.

Through all the watches of the lonely night  
 The faint breath lingered, till with one last sigh  
 His pure soul vanished in eternal light,  
 As the stars faded in the morning sky.  
     Night's shadows fled,  
 Morn came—they sadly whispered : " He is dead."

But the stars shine, although the glare of day  
 Has hid them from our feebly-straining eyes,  
 So he still lives whose light has pass'd away,  
 And shall for ever, though creation dies.  
     The breath of God  
 Can never mingle with the church-yard sod.

\* The oldest Independent Minister in South Australia.

But not for us he lives, whose strength was spent  
Unselfishly for others' good. Ah, no !  
No more to us his precious life is lent :  
A voice has called, he could not choose, but go  
From toil, to rest  
For ever on his Saviour's tender breast.

The church-bell rings ; the congregations meet  
Where years ago they met with him for prayer ;  
The same hands clasp, the same kind voices greet,  
But he no more is heard or met with there.  
They speak of him,  
And every heart grows sad and eye grows dim.

Why speak in pitying accents ? He who stood  
Weary and worn among us, now is blest.  
Death comes with gentle aspect to the good ;  
His cold touch softly stills them into rest.  
Eternal peace  
For mind and body greets the soul's release.

Look up, the sky is shining bright and fair,  
With but a dim cloud, like the hallow'd breath  
Of angels breathed upon the clear cold air—  
We long to search its depths ; yet this is death.  
To pierce the sky  
And rise beyond its mysteries, is to die.

## THE CENSUS.

THOU'RT come again, old messenger,  
 To tell us how the months have flown.  
 Thou'rt come again, with searching eye,  
 To ask the secrets all our own.

Thou'rt come to take, thou'rt come to give ;  
 For on the simple empty page  
 Are written thoughts and memories,  
 The hopes and fears of youth and age.

To some thou speakest of the past,  
 And whisperest, " Where is now the face  
 " When last I came that welcomed me,  
 " Whose name filled up an empty space ?

" Say, is it hushed in death's deep sleep,  
 " That gladsome heart that knew not woe ;  
 " The merry voice that told how oft  
 " She'd seen the summers come and go ? "

For age, oh, thou hast many words  
 Beneath thy surface white and cold.  
 Thou wak'st him from a pleasant dream,  
 And whisperest, " Thou art growing old. "

- "Thy day is past, thy sun is low,  
    " And round thee sighs eve's warning breath ;  
"The gathering twilight of thy life  
    " Is darkening to the gloom of death.
- "And, ere I come again, thy place  
    " May be beneath the cold green sod ;  
"But thy free soul shall render up  
    " A fuller census to its God.
- "A last account, a long, long scroll  
    " Of all that thou hast been below ;  
"A passport to th' eternal realms  
    " Of everlasting joy or woe."

THOUGHTS SUGGESTED BY THE FATE OF MR.  
BURKE AND HIS COMPANION.

(AUSTRALIAN EXPLORERS, WHO DIED IN THE BUSH).

HUSH, hush, old trees, 'twere sin to whisper here,  
Hush, hush, and let your withering leaves drop  
down,

Like tears upon the spot where death has been.  
Weep, ancient trees, death's step has lingered here.  
Weep for the strong brave hearts whose last low  
prayers

Went murmuring up to heaven athwart your leaves.  
Lone spot, where death perchance has never been  
Ere this; hath never shown his mighty power,  
Save in the gentle fading of the flowers,  
Or silent mouldering of the foliage sere.

Sad place in which to breathe life's latest sigh,  
With no one nigh to bend in sorrowing love;  
No form to meet the wistful, wandering gaze;  
Only the shadowy trees and cloudless sky,  
That weary with their sameness. Yet 'twas here  
Those two brave-hearted men laid down to die,  
After the toilsome journeying through the woods

With thirst unslaked ; with weary, bleeding feet  
Returning here to perish. Wondrous fate !  
To die with life so near, with joy and rest  
And hearty greetings waiting, but a few  
Short miles away. Oh, hope, why didst thou fail ?  
Why did thy lamp, whose glimmering light had  
cheered

Thro' cheerless wanderings, toil and want and pain,  
Burn out when suffering was almost done,  
When life was almost gained—burn out and leave  
The night of death to settle thick and dark  
On those undaunted souls ?

Oh, that sad hour

When hope grew dimmer, dimmer, in each breast,  
And on the pale blue quiet evening sky  
Appeared the mirage of a far-off home ;  
And nature's sounds that murmured in the air  
Seemed voices from the busy haunts of men.  
Ah ! how they rang around ! They welcomed them  
With shouts of joy. They praised and spoke of  
fame—

A place in history's page—a name to live ;  
Perhaps some low glad whisper promised love  
And peace, and rest, and ever-cheering smiles.  
Then rose the earth-bound spirit's feeble prayer—  
“ Oh, death, let fancy live, though hope be dead,  
“ A little while. Oh faint home-voices, stay.”  
In vain. The silent darkness stealeth on ;

Sight, thought, and hearing fail. "Oh life, farewell."

And did they speak of fame, those sounds of earth  
That lingered in the dying wanderers' ears,  
Fame, what availeth it? No answering throb  
Of the still heart responds to the vain word.  
The sighing trees and senseless song of birds  
Give as much joy to those who buy their fame  
With life. Yet it is theirs, bold daring men.  
A glorious work is done. A people's praise,  
A people's tears are theirs. And with the names—  
The far-famed names—of those who bore unscathed  
The perils of that trackless forest-sea  
Shall mingle those of them that sank beneath  
Its gloomy waves.



PARTED.

PARTED!—It is a sad and solemn word,  
 That weaves around my heart a silent spell,  
 A gentle untold sadness, like unheard  
 Dim mist upon some solitary dell.

Parted!—And now the dark relentless sea  
 Must intervene between each oft clasped hand.  
 And now our ways are separate; thou must be  
 A wanderer in a strange and unproved land.

And other friends will win your loving heart,  
 And other smiles will greet you as you roam;  
 While I move on my quiet way apart,  
 Unchanging in my calm Australian home.

Parted!—and are those moments fled for aye  
 We've spent together, must I know them o'er,  
 Gone, like the whispering wind of yesterday,  
 That blessed in passing, but returns no more?

Parted!—I feel it, when some hand grasps mine,  
 Or happy voice rings out upon my ear.

They bring to me that hand and voice of thine,—  
All force me to remember thou'rt not near !

Parted !—God bless thee on thine untrod way,  
And keep thee in the future far and dim !  
So shall the trials of life's little day  
But kindly lead thee nearer still to Him.

## EVENING—A FRAGMENT.

It is the evening hour, and silently  
The day has folded all his robes of light,  
And laid them gently on the sea's blue breast,  
While, one by one, pale little trembling stars,  
Come forth to watch the last faint crimson streak  
Fade from the west. How beautiful it is ;  
How calm and holy this still eventide.  
And some there are, who through the long hot  
    day,  
Have watched and yearned for such a peaceful  
    hour,  
Sick with the care or weary with the pain  
Of life. Day's sunlight seemed but mockery ;  
Each tired head shrank from it, and the eyes  
Aching with unshed tears waited for night,  
Soft pitying night, in her soft viewless arms  
To weep unseen.—And it is come ; the heat  
And burden of one toilsome day is past ;  
A cool wind fans the feverish cheek, and lifts  
The damp hair softly from the throbbing brow.  
Oh, rest and peace, how sweetly have ye come

With the dim shadows of the quiet eve.  
And I could stay for ever in the calm  
Of this still dreamy hour, for ever watch  
The darkness gathering o'er the yellow fields;  
And welcome all the crowding stars that come  
So quickly, filling every space of blue,  
Until the sky seems like some glorious mind,  
All full of starry thoughts.

No ruder sound

Than the low hushing of the waving trees,  
Rocking all weary little birds to rest.  
No rougher breeze than this, which scarcely  
plucks,  
With its soft fingers Autumn's withering leaves,  
Disturb my rest.

But I am dreaming now,

I'm dreaming, dreaming, till my heart is full,—  
So full of peace and joy in this calm hour,  
All perfect in its holy loveliness,  
That I have almost sighed to think, in heaven  
There is no night.

## MY STEED.

(TWENTY-TWO YEARS OF AGE.)

My good old Bess, thine eyes are dim,  
Thy step is growing slow.  
I cannot find it in my heart,  
To make thee faster go.  
Yet come with me to-day, old friend,  
Upon the sunniest hill ;  
I know 'tis time thy work were done,  
But thou art willing still.

I've not a single memory,  
Of years that knew not thee ;  
In all my past, my good old Bess,  
Thou livest pleasantly.  
Ah, thou could'st tell, my silent friend,  
The tales of other years ;  
Bring back old days to memory,  
And start unbidden tears.

Old days, when little hands caressed  
And fed and guided thee ;

While all around the echoes rang,  
With childhood's revelry.  
'Tis past; but little voices still  
Ring out as glad and wild;  
For now, old Bess, 'tis thine to bear,  
The children of the child.

And thou hast known full many a scene  
Of human joy or pain,  
When following in the bridal throng  
Or in the funeral train.  
And thou couldst tell of whispered words,  
And eyes with joy all wet,  
When loving hands have clasped o'er thee,  
And loving lips have met.

And thou couldst tell of many a sigh,  
And many a murmur'd prayer,  
Breathed softly in the solitudes,  
When none but God was there.  
And thou has felt quick falling tears  
Drop glittering on thy mane,  
And heard the vain regrets for hours  
That might not come again!

Methinks thou must have memories,  
Old Bess, of days gone by—

When life was dancing in thy veins,  
And fire was in thine eye.  
But thou are silent, gentle Bess,  
Say, is the past forgot?  
Ah, could I win from thee the power,  
I would remember not.

## THE POET'S WILL.

BURY them with me, mother,  
 If I should die,  
 That packet dear of letters,  
 Oh, let them lie

With me in the gloomy silence  
 Of that dark home.  
 The words I have loved in lifetime  
 There let them come.

When I've said "Farewell," my mother,  
 To him "Farewell ;"  
 And death hath rudely broken  
 Love's mystic spell.

When the hand will cease its writing  
 And pulseless lie,  
 And the last fond word will reach him  
 His love may die:

Then give me the words he's written  
 To me the last ;  
 Another may one day hear them ;  
 Bury the past.



Bury it with me, mother,  
His lock of hair,  
Lay it upon my bosom,  
Oh, lay it there.

Send him the words I've written,  
The songs I've penn'd.  
And tell him the love I bore him  
Has known no end.

Tell him if guardian angels,  
Are those we love,  
Who have left earth's sin and sorrow  
For homes above,

And return as unseen spirits,  
Say *I* will come  
To watch o'er his earthly pathway,  
And guide him home.

## AN AUSTRALIAN GIRL'S FAREWELL.

I'm leaving thee, my happy native land,  
 I'm leaving thee for years, perhaps for ever ;  
 But still my heart is clinging to thy strand,  
 And still repining—must, oh must we sever ?

What though the land I go to rises fair,  
 And glittering like a jewel from the sea,  
 I know it not ; strange scenes will meet me there—  
 Australia, my home, I cling to thee.

I cling to thee. Each songless bird I love  
 That flutters through the still and sultry air ;  
 Each withered leaf, that, borne by winds above,  
 Goes trembling up to heaven like a prayer.

Like moss upon some storm-worn rugged stone,  
 Australia, my spirit cleaves to thee ;  
 Like branches from the vine, when leaves have  
 grown,  
 My heart is bleeding for its parent tree.

Yes, I am bidding thee a long good-bye,  
A dearer voice than thine is calling me ;  
But oft in other homes for thee I'll sigh,  
Still shall my hope be, oh, to die in thee.

What though they plant some waving forest tree,  
Or stately palm above my last lone bed,  
Methinks my sleep would yet more peaceful be,  
With *thy* blue sky and guardian stars o'erhead.

Adieu, my native land, mine eyes are dim ;  
The thought *will* come—I ne'er shall see thee  
more ;  
Oh, for the sea-bird's power the waves to skim,  
And rest its weary wing upon thy shore.

## BEAUTIFUL FANCIES.

BEAUTIFUL fancies come to me now  
 As a cool hand comes to a burning brow,  
 Or a drop of rain to a fading flower,  
 Soothing my heart in this gloomy hour.  
 Beautiful fancies come and go,  
 Till my heart seems freed from its weight of woe.  
Beautiful fancies !

Beautiful fancies of voices low,  
 That I loved so well in the long ago.  
 Beautiful fancies of faces dear,  
 And loved forms hovering near, so near ;  
 Of arms that around me were wont to twine,  
 And of dear lips pressing close to mine—  
Beautiful fancies !

Vanishing fancies, why will ye die  
 Like the last red gleams in a sunset sky ?  
 Why will ye leave me alone to-night,  
 In the gloomy hours of waning light ;  
 Alone, to remember the days gone by,  
 With an aching heart and a tear dimmed eye,  
Vanishing fancies !

## PETERBOTH.\*

THE sun has gone from the western skies,  
 Like a glorious thought from a common mind,  
 Leaving some lingering rays behind,  
 While the perfect whole in its grandeur dies.

And the misty mountains are almost drest  
 In their robes of cloud as the night draws nigh,  
 And only one from among the rest,  
 Stands grandly forth in its frame of sky.

I am watching now, as the shadows fall,  
 That mountain dim, with the heavens above,  
 And the earth beneath looking up in love,  
 As a slumb'ring child at its father's call.

But to me it seemeth this mountain grand  
 Not as a father is standing there,  
 But a preacher old, from the unknown land,  
 Making our island a house of prayer.

\* The second highest mountain in Mauritius, 2,874 feet above the level of the sea.

And ever he standeth and preacheth on  
In the holy hours of early day,  
When the midnight shadows have fled away,  
And the stars that listened all night are gone.

In the busy day when the world's hot sun  
Has dried from our hearts the dews of prayer,  
And left them aching with sin and care,  
Panting for rest, and yet finding none.

And he standeth still in these twilight hours,  
That voiceless preacher, as he has stood,  
Since the ancient days when this world of ours,  
'Neath the smile of its Maker was "very good!"

Would ye know the words of this preacher old?  
He tells of a power that placed him there,  
And, wrapping around him each rock-wrought fold,  
Left him alone in the silent air.

Left him alone on the new-born earth,  
When none o'er its valleys and hills had trod,  
To tell of the wonderful works of God,  
Ere a soul to listen had yet had birth.

Now the earth is full, and the busy brain  
And toiling hands go hurrying by,  
And the laughing lip and the tear-worn eye,  
All meet in this valley of joy and pain.

But that ancient preacher is preaching there,  
Of a higher home and a God of love :  
And earth's busy hearts are so full of care,  
They will not listen nor look above.

Oh, why will they die, while the words from  
heaven  
Are written all over the earth in love,  
While the glorious mountains by God are given  
To tell of more glorious hills above.

## AMY.

(OUR ELDEST CHILD.)

BUT I have a thousand pictures,  
Lying safely stored away,  
Of our little Amy dearie,  
As she lives from day to day.

I've a picture of the morning  
After Amy dearie came,—  
Aunts and uncles, young and merry,  
Crowding round to fix her name.

And the French and English mingling,  
Sounded not so strangely there,  
As they teased each other, laughing  
At the titles they would bear.

I who'd been with them a stranger,  
Longing for the home of old,  
Felt the tie to new relations,  
Closer drawn a thousand-fold.



Amy, like the cord which binds the  
Leaf upon a budded tree,  
Binds with golden circles tightly  
Me to them, and them to me.

Amy dearie, I can see her,  
When she came to me one day,  
Came and put her arms around me  
As with something great to say.

But she only kissed me softly  
On my lips and on my cheek,  
Whispering "mamma" so fondly—  
It was all that she could speak.

Amy dearie, always busy,  
Doing something wrong or right,  
Learning, teasing, crying, laughing,  
Doing all with main and might.

Tearing books, or swallowing buttons,  
Pinching fingers in the door,  
Every day in some new mischief,  
Unenjoy'd the day before.

## ON THE DEATH OF AMY.

We called her our Amy dearie,  
 The little one God had given,  
 And we never thought that she was not ours,  
 Till she went to Christ in heaven.

Now months have passed since we laid her  
 Under the sheltering sod,  
 Long months of bliss to our darling  
 In the arms of her Saviour God.

And we know that she liveth ever,  
 Safe from all touch of harm ;  
 For "He feedeth His flock like a Shepherd,  
 "He gathers the lambs with His arm—

"And carries them in His bosom ;"  
 And so when He gathered her  
 We knew she had only left us  
 For a tenderer bosom *there*.

But we loved her so very dearly,  
 With a wondrous, wondrous power,  
 She lay in our hearts as dew lies  
 Deep in the cup of a flower.

And so, though we knew her spirit  
Had gone to its home on high ;  
We wept for the dear little body ;  
How could we let it die ?

Dear little head, with its beauty  
Of sunniest clustering hair ;  
Dear little eyes, with the soul-light  
Undimmed by earth's veil of care ;

Dear little forehead's smoothness,  
Never again to press ;  
Dear little limbs' soft roundness  
Never again to caress ;

Dear little arms entwining,  
We never again may feel ;  
Dear little heart's short sorrows,  
We never again may heal.

\* \* \* \* \*

Gone ! long gone ; yet we're missing  
Our sweet little Amy still ;  
Missing her still from our memory,  
Though another our *arms* may fill.

Missing her still in the midnight,  
Though near in the darkness lies  
One with the same dear features,  
And the same sweet wondering eyes ;

And e'en when the little one with us  
Is making our hearts rejoice,  
Missing *her* pattering footsteps,  
And her tiny baby-voice.

And oh, it is hard to miss her  
When together we kneel in prayer,  
So hard I can scarce refuse her  
In all our petitions a share ;

But would pray the good Lord to keep her  
So tenderly in her rest,  
To watch still over our dear one,  
And bless her among the blest.

Yes, evermore shall we miss her,  
Though others may yet be ours !  
She was the first in our love's young days,  
The first of our spring's bright flowers.

And so, though our summer be happy,  
And many a blossom be given,  
We shall ever be thinking of Amy,  
Our first-fruit given to heaven.

Oh, that a glimpse could be given us  
Of the little ones living there ;  
Dear little children, ascended  
To those unknown homes of air,

We wonder if Amy has found them ;  
And if, gathered in one bright band,  
Linnie and Eva, and Amy and Nellie\*  
Go wandering hand in hand.

We're sighing to go to our dearie,  
For to us she can never come.  
And life seems blank and weary,  
So far from our darling's home.

\* Three little nieces.

## SOULS FORGOTTEN.

(SUGGESTED BY THE SAD WANT OF RELIGIOUS INTERCOURSE BETWEEN  
MISTRESS AND MAID).

On the earth God's angels wander,  
And they see not as we see  
This vain world in outward seeming ;  
But they watch, and gaze, and ponder,  
On the souls, great mystery,  
Souls that on our earth are teeming.

In the dwellings, high or lowly,  
Noiselessly they come and go,  
And they see not bodies merely,  
But with reverent eyes and holy,  
As they wander to and fro,  
They the soul-life see most clearly.

For around us souls are lying,  
Though our dim eyes mark them not ;  
Souls, all dear to God and heaven,  
Living, dreaming, fearing, dying,  
With us daily, yet forgot,  
Souls unto our keeping given.

Into yonder home, where voices  
All day long like golden bells,  
Little voices tinkle sweetly,  
While each childish heart rejoices,  
From its clear, untainted wells,  
As the days are passing fleetly ;

In that home a mother loving  
Lingers near each tiny bed,  
While the evening shades are falling,  
On love's little missions moving,  
Now to smooth the weary head,  
Now to still the small voice calling.

Ah, she loves them with a yearning  
Only mother's heart can know,  
As she prays with tears to heaven ;  
All her soul within her burning,  
That each blessing here below,  
To her darlings may be given.

One is there who watches, listening  
With a deadness at her heart ;  
No one recks *her* limbs are aching,  
No one sees the tears are glistening,  
No one thinks they ever start,  
But the angels watch are taking.

Days and months and years she lingers  
Here whence oft ascends the prayer ;  
But her heart and mind are clouded,  
And to heaven point no kind fingers,  
And no voices pray for *her* :  
All her soul in sin is shrouded.

Then there comes a great temptation  
Worse than e'er had come before ;  
Ah, she falls, and wanders weeping,  
While a storm of condemnation  
Drives her trembling from the door ;  
But the angels watch are keeping.

Didst thou think, oh, tender mother,  
With the children round thy knee,  
That the Saviour pure and holy,  
Loving more than friend or brother,  
Only died for them and thee,  
And forgot the lost and lowly ?

No. Our Jesus loves as dearly  
As thy babe of tender care,  
The forsaken lost and dreary ;  
And in dying, died not merely  
For a child of many a prayer,  
But the low, despised and weary ;

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For the souls around us lying,  
    Though our dim eyes see them not ;  
Souls, all dear to God and heaven,  
Living, dreaming, fearing, dying,  
    With us daily, yet forgot,  
Souls unto our keeping given.

## CAPE TOWN.

BRIGHT and beautiful Cape Town stands  
Looking out on the open sea ;  
Nursing its white ships merrily,  
And laughing in careless mockery,  
At the paltry works of human hands.

Bright and beautiful Cape Town, bound  
By the giant mountains, like a band  
Of ancient warriors, hand in hand,  
Standing for ever to guard the land  
From the storms that struggle and fight around.

Bright and beautiful Cape Town, lying  
Like the upturned face of a child of sin,  
Formed by its beauty our love to win,  
Yet hiding its sorrow and guilt within,  
And laughing, to smother the deeper sighing.

Who will speak to the beautiful city,  
Standing alone by the holy sea,  
Shining in stainless purity,  
And watched by the mountains mistily ;  
Who will speak in love or in pity ?

Will no one speak in earth or in heaven ?

Will no one cry down each crowded street,  
Where the sinful and sorrowful wanderers meet,  
“ There’s a rest for the weary and toilworn feet,  
“ And a pardon awaiting the unforgiven ? ”

Christ will speak to the beautiful city ;

Not with the voice of His mighty thunder,  
Rending the earth and seas asunder,  
And echoing down to the caverns under,  
But with the whispers of love and pity.

Christ will speak, for the time is nearing,

The days of His kingdom undefiled ;  
And Christ will speak to each tired child,  
And calm with His Spirit earth’s passions wild,  
In the day of His blest appearing.

## PORT LOUIS, FROM CHAMP DE MARS.

(COMPOSED DURING AN EPIDEMIC FEVER.)

Just a few clouds in heaven's boundless space,  
Only a few, to give it change and grace,  
As smiles redeem the plainness of a face.

Just a few clouds in heaven, and nothing more,  
Below, the clear waves beating on the shore,  
Mingling their music with the city's roar.

As sometimes in the city of our mind,  
'Mid its distracting hurried thoughts we find  
The music of some day-dream stay behind.

I gaze upon the city nestled there,  
My eye cannot behold its forms of care,  
Its want, and filth, and it seems very fair.

Sitting so calmly at the mountain's feet,  
And sheltered from the summer's scorching heat,  
By its rich growth of foliage, green and sweet.

I cannot see the dust upon the street,  
Or hear the ceaseless tramp of tired feet  
Or watch the sickly suffering faces meet,

But, here and there, I see the palm-trees rise,  
With arms uplifted to the glorious skies,  
As if transfixed in sudden glad surprise.

A roof, a garret window, here and there,  
Peeps out among the foliage, strange and rare,  
And there is nothing lonely, blank or bare.

E'en where our dearly-loved and dead ones lie,  
The filios clust'ring, mingle their soft sigh  
With the low mourning of the sea close by.

Then from the city's midst, with charmed eyes,  
I see the spire of a fair church arise,  
Pointing with glittering finger to the skies.

Oh, city false ! so pure and bright to see,  
Yet full of want, of death and misery,  
The God of mercy hear and pity thee !

Oh city, fold thy trembling hands, and pray  
That He who turns the darkness into day,  
May melt thy clouds of pestilence away.

“ Let there be light ! ” Christ, say those words  
once more

In every stricken home upon our shore,  
And Thy best blessings on our island pour !

## LA FÊTE DES MORTS.

COME let us keep the festival,—'tis right,  
 To cease awhile our business and our pleasure,  
 Our eager search for earthly fame or treasure,  
 And think of things beyond our sensual sight.

There was a time when all the world seem'd  
 gladder,  
 The sunshine brighter, and the winds more sweet;  
 And when we trod with quicker, lighter, feet,  
 Scarcely believing time would make us sadder.

Now we are often footsore, full of pain,  
 And longing vainly for old resting places,  
 And silent voices and long vanished faces  
 That left us once, and never came again.

Oh, they were precious to our hearts, and yet,  
 Are living there, as sad sea-voices dwell  
 Deep in the hollow of an empty shell,  
 So that we could not if we *would* forget.

Then let us set aside a few short hours,  
 To think of happier days when they were near us;  
 To talk of them, altho' they cannot hear us,  
 And dress their graves with sweet memorial flowers.

We will unlock the long sealed drawers to-day,  
And look upon the relics hidden there :  
Dear little clothes our babies used to wear,  
Before Christ sent to call them hence away.

Now they are lying, still and dead and cold,  
Those soft warm limbs we cherished on our  
breast ;  
The busy little hearts have dropp'd to rest,  
And only left us grown more sad and old.

So sad, so old ! we shut our tired eyes,  
And try to think the end will soon be here ;  
And we shall cease to count each dragging year,  
That only seems to bring us tears and sighs.

Oh, precious ones,—our offered flowers decay,  
But never can our hearts cease longing after  
The pattering footsteps, and the baby laughter,  
We have not heard for many a long, long day.

Christ, bring us all to that dear home above  
Where there shall be no mourning for the dead,  
No scattering flowers above the buried head,  
No pain in life, no bitterness in love.

## THE TRIAL.\*

Oh, bitter, bitter cup,  
 Filled to the brim with untold agony—  
 And this is mine ; it is appointed me  
 To drink it up !

Oh ! heavy cross,  
 Oh burden, greater than my heart can bear,  
 I sink beneath its load of pain and care ;  
 My life is only dross.

Yet none can know,  
 Only the heart, its own great bitterness ;  
 The tenderest ones I on my bosom press  
 Guess not its depth of woe.

How sweet were death  
 To me, who only long for peace and rest ;  
 Thou welcome messenger, for ever blest,  
 Wilt thou not steal my breath ?

\* Composed about three months before her death, while labouring under a sad nervous affection.



The palm trees wave,  
The birds are singing, and the sky is blue ;  
How sweet to-day to say a last adieu,  
And rest me in the grave !

But life, not death  
Is mine ; like those steep mountains far away  
The long years rise before me cold and grey,  
To tread with panting breath.

How the birds sing to-day,  
I think they must be mocking at my pain ;  
Those birds o'erflowing with their merry strain,  
Go, take the cage away.

How bright the sunshine lies  
On those gay crimson flowers and yellow leaves,  
Caressingly ; and yet my heart believes,  
'Tis but to vex my eyes.

How the sea bears  
Down on the coral reefs ; and, leaping high,  
Scatters its flakes of foam to the blue sky,  
As glad hearts scatter prayers.

And the long fields of cane,  
How gently bow their plumes with a glad sigh,  
Like human crowds, when a great king goes by,  
They bend and rise again.

All perfect happiness,  
All beauty spread before my envious eyes ;  
All mirth and peace beneath the bending skies,  
For *me* my cup of bitterness.

Oh, soul, dost thou repine ;  
Seest thou the hand that gives thy bitter draught ?  
A *pierced* hand ; and He who holds has quaffed  
A bitterer cup than thine.

He lived a sinless life,  
Yet bore the heaviest penalties of sin ;  
He felt the depth of agony within,  
Unknown in thy poor strife.

Then drink without a sigh  
From His dear hands. He knows the bitterness,  
Better than heart can feel or words express,  
Yet gives—He knoweth why.

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## A PRAYER.

THE LAST POEM OF THE AUTHORESS.

OH, God, my soul is very dark to-night ;  
 Thy strengthening presence shall I never know ?  
 Oh, once again I pray for faith and light ;  
 I cannot let Thee go.

I cannot let Thee go ; yet round my heart  
 A heavy veil of doubt seems slowly twining.  
 Christ, burst the earth-wrought fabric wide apart,  
 And show me truth in Thine own person  
 shining ;  
 For I could part with all I love below,  
 But *Thee*, I cannot, will not let *Thee* go.

I cannot live without a Father here—  
 In this sad weary world, a God above ;  
 An over-ruling presence ever near,  
 Guiding my steps in love.

I cannot live without a Saviour's face,  
 To smile upon me in these dark, dark hours,  
 Without a hope in His sufficient grace,  
 To raise and strengthen all my failing powers.

Have I not given my life up to Thy will?  
Then to this fearful heart say, "Peace, be still."

Yea, though Thou slay me, I will trust in Thee,  
And lie for ever prostrate at Thy feet,  
Until in pity Thou dost smile on me  
From Thy bright mercy-seat.

I know Thou hast not quite forgot Thy child,  
For Thou hast come to me as mighty wind  
To forest trees, stripping, in anger wild  
Their foliage crown, and leaving wrecks  
behind.

So of its idols Thou hast shorn my heart,  
Leaving it waiting for the "better part."

Then give me *that* Thou wilt not take again,  
And bid my smitten heart once more rejoice.  
Come not in anger o'er Thy child to reign;  
Come with Thy still small voice.

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